

# The Anti-Slavery Reporter and Aborigines' Friend

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October, 1914



Palm Oil Shipping in German Togoland, the scene of recent Anglo-French operations.

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# Anti-Slavery Reporter and Aborigines' Friend.

OCTOBER, 1914.

*[The Editor, whilst grateful to all correspondents who may be kind enough to furnish him with information, desires to state that he is not responsible for the views stated by them, nor for questions which may be inserted from other journals. The object of the journal is to spread information, and articles are necessarily quoted which may contain views or statements for which their authors can alone be held responsible.]*

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## Quarterly Notes.

### Native Races and the War.

THERE may be a disposition to think that in the general upheaval caused by the war and the preoccupation of the public mind and the administrative departments in the national crisis, there is little or no scope for the Society's work. While, however, it is true that we are temporarily precluded from public action through the Press, and to some extent in Parliament, this very preoccupation imposes on the Society the heavy responsibility of watching more closely than ever the treatment of native races and of taking steps to counteract the danger of oppression and injustice. In one part of the world the Committee is charged with the maintenance of a difficult struggle in order to safeguard the rights of two millions of natives on a question of vital importance to them and to the British colonies, and this struggle will involve large financial expenditure. The present number of the *Reporter* (which is shorter than usual) relates almost entirely to events which took place before the beginning of the war, and not a little material—e.g., the report of the important debate in the House of Lords on Portuguese Slavery in July—is omitted, or held over for a future issue.

We earnestly ask our friends not to relax their interest in and support of our Society at this difficult and anxious time.

### South African Native Deputation.

THE native delegates who came to this country to appeal to the Government against the operation of the Native Land Act, after failing to obtain satisfaction from their interview with the Secretary of State for the Colonies, issued an appeal to Members of Parliament and the public, stating their case and the urgent need for some public action in their support. This was done with the approval of our Society, and the delegates were given the opportunity of laying their case before our Parliamentary Committee. A report will be found below of the debate in the House of Commons, and of the speeches there made by Sir A. Spicer and Mr. Percy

Alden. When the great events of the end of July occurred and the European war began, it was felt that it was futile for the delegates to remain longer in this country than was absolutely necessary, and arrangements were made for their return as soon as this became possible. While we profoundly regret the failure of the delegates to obtain any satisfaction from the British Government, we are glad to know that their statement of their case aroused much interest and sympathy among those to whom they spoke at public and other gatherings, and but for the sudden interruption of their plans by the war they would have been able to accomplish much more in this direction in different parts of the country.

**New  
Hebrides.**

AN important book on this question, entitled *France and England in the New Hebrides*,\* by Mr. Edward Jacomb, of Vila, has been published in Australia, and copies are, we understand, to be obtained in this country. Mr. Jacomb possesses a wide knowledge of the conditions, and unique experience at first hand of the problem which they present, and we heartily commend this valuable book to all interested in the subject. We hope to publish a review of the book in a later issue.

**A Definition  
of  
Slavery.**

WE would draw attention to Mr. Harcourt's pronouncement contained in a letter given below, and made also in Parliament, that forced labour for private profit amounts to slavery, and as such should be stopped. The Society hails these assurances of prominent statesmen as having the highest significance and value.

**A Coloured  
Senator in  
France.**

FRANCE alone among the colonizing Powers finds a place in the Imperial Legislature for representatives of her dominions beyond the sea. Most of her colonies are represented by a Senator and one or more deputies. The news has now reached us that a pure-blooded Joloff has been elected as the deputy for French Senegal. This is probably the most important landmark in African history since Moshesh built up the Basuto kingdom in South Africa.

### Conference on Portuguese Slavery.

A PRIVATE Conference on the slavery question in Portuguese West Africa was convened by the Society at the Whitehall Rooms on July 16. The Archbishop of Canterbury presided, and those present included the Earls of Selborne and Lytton, Lords Lamington and Channing, the Liberian Minister, Sir T. Fowell Buxton (President of the Society), Mr. J. St. Loe Strachey, Messrs. Ian Malcolm, M.P., Noel Buxton, M.P., S. J. Hoare, M.P., the Hon. J. C. Lyttelton, M.P., T. E. Harvey, M.P., the Rev. Dr. R. Wardlaw

\* George Robertson & Co., 17, Warwick Square, E.C.

Thompson, M. Edouard Naville (Geneva), Sir W. Geary, Sir C. J. Tarring, Mr. E. D. Morel, Mr. F. W. Fox (Vice-Chairman), Mr. E. W. Brooks (Treasurer), Rev. Canon Masterman, and other members of the Committee, and the Secretaries.

The ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY, in opening the meeting, said that there was a whole sheaf of reasons for the grave burden of responsibility which rested on us as Englishmen in this matter. A great change had been brought about which ought to be the warmest encouragement to go forward in a wise manner. We ought to insist that we will not be parties to a system which we believe to be morally indefensible.

He strongly emphasized the importance of public opinion which not only encouraged public opinion in other lands, but also helped our own Foreign Office. For that reason he placed the greatest possible value on gatherings of that kind.

Anyone who had read the White Papers which had lately been issued on the subject and compared them with those of five or six years ago must have been struck with the great change which had come about. One would search the White Papers of to-day in vain for the old arguments which had been used from time immemorial that the natives were much better off under slavery conditions than they would be at home.

Now that we had reached a higher standard, we ought to impress upon our Government that English people really did care about these things and about our Treaty obligations.

He was glad when he was able to speak on this subject, as on the present occasion, without reserve.

LORD SELBORNE reminded the meeting that we had more intimate treaty obligations with Portugal than with any other country. It was the only country with which we had an Alliance so old and so definite, and that gave us a very definite *locus standi* in the matter. We were responsible for the integrity of the whole of the possessions of Portugal—an obligation on our part which was totally unaffected by the change in the Portuguese Government. In view of these binding obligations, we certainly had the right to criticize and to bring pressure to bear upon Portugal if we thought there was any reason to question the conditions in any one of her colonies which we were bound to defend.

In Portuguese colonies one was confronted with a very strange conflict of conceptions. Every one knew the attitude of the white man to the black man in South Africa. There, there could be no question of a mixture of the two races. One never found a white man and a black man sitting side by side, or white and black children attending the same schools. In Portuguese colonies, however, there was absolutely no colour prejudice. In the schools one found white and black children mixed; in government offices one found



clerks of every hue sitting side by side. The Portuguese had no more prejudice against the natives than the natives' own chiefs, and treated them in much the same manner as their chiefs would do. It was important to remember that a very large proportion of the Portuguese officials were not of pure European descent.

When he went up country on one occasion to meet some British officials from Northern Rhodesia (then North-Western Rhodesia), who had come from the extreme north-west corner of that territory where Portuguese East Africa, the Congo Free State and British territory meet, they informed him that their territory was frequently crossed by slave parties, and although they did all in their power to prevent this, the vastness of the territory made it very easy for slave parties to slip through. From information then received, and which he duly sent to the Government in London, he was convinced that this practice was going on.

He supported everything that the Archbishop had said.

MR. ST. LOE STRACHEY, as Chairman of the Portuguese Sub-Committee of the Anti-Slavery and Aborigines Protection Society, thanked the Archbishop for his presence on the occasion, and attached enormous importance to it. His Grace had made it one of the conditions of his great office not to give his support lightly to movements of this kind. This movement was of national importance, national honour, national conscience, and national virtue, and he believed it was because of this that His Grace had consented to preside over the meeting, thus showing to the world at home and abroad that he was in entire sympathy with the cause.

After referring to the absence of Lord Cromer through illness, he said that the Archbishop and Lord Selborne had dealt so ably and with such point and clearness with the question of the Alliance that there was very little left for him to say. He would like, however, to emphasize the difference between our friendship and understanding with Portugal and those with other Powers. Portugal was the only country whose colonies we absolutely guaranteed. Under certain circumstances which might conceivably arise we, as a nation, should be bound to go to the assistance of Portugal and defend her slave colonies. That was an intolerable position, a position which we should not and ought not to bear.

He agreed with His Grace that we had made a good deal of progress at the top, but, unfortunately, there had not been much progress at the bottom.

He would like to say a word or two as to the arguments which were often brought forward by the advocates of Portugal. There were two. The first was that the situation was improving rapidly. He thought public opinion was improving a great deal, but there was very little real improvement in the colonial possessions of Portugal. In fact, the terrible scarcity of labour was raising the demand, and owing to that scarcity a Portuguese Government

official had himself become a slave-trader. Therefore the situation had not improved, rather the reverse, for never before had we had an example of a Portuguese official going into the slave-trade business.

Now as to the second argument, often used by Portuguese writers, that slavery is a benevolent institution for the black man, and further that we have no right to criticize unless we first put our own house in order. No doubt there were bad things going on in British colonies, we had only to look at the last *Anti-Slavery Reporter* to see the truth of such a statement, but we did not resent these incidents being brought to our notice ; on the contrary, we should be delighted if the Portuguese would tell us where things were wrong and aid us in putting them right. We must not, however, take our hands off the plough because of these assertions.

Lord MAYO said that the reports sent in by our Consuls absolutely confirmed all the statements put before the Foreign Office by the Anti-Slavery and Aborigines Protection Society.

Some years ago he had been in Angola and had travelled on board ship with the slaves and, as far as he could make out, the system had not altered very much since he was in that part of the world.

He did not think we could do away with the contract system all at once. The grave objection to it was that these people were forced down to the coast, put on board ship, landed on the islands, and there left without hope of return.

He thought something definite should be put forward to begin with, and he suggested that when the labourers were brought down to the coast, they should go before a Portuguese official, our Consul being also present, and if they objected to their contracts and wished to return home, they should be allowed to do so.

With regard to re-contracting on the islands, the renewed contracts, as Vice-Consul Smallbones had pointed out, were a farce, and they were a farce very largely owing to this reason—that instead of the natives going down to the office of the Curador to be asked whether they were willing to remain on the islands or not, the Curador went round the estates with the planters, and no doubt every sort of argument and bribe was put before the natives in order to get them to stop. He would like to suggest that the labourers should go down to the office of the Curador, and there have the question put to them as to whether they wished to re-contract, and if they did not wish to go back to their masters they should be kept there and put on board the first ship touching at the islands. These things he thought we should urge and might get.

Repatriation was a matter we should be absolutely firm upon. According to the carrying capacity of the ships that touched at the islands, the serviçaes should be shipped to Angola, and from there they should be sent to their homes. If the natives were repatriated to the full carrying capacity of

the ships and given their money on landing, they could get to their homes in comfort.

He would like to impress upon the Conference that they should ask for something definite and stick to it.

Under our treaty with Portugal, we were bound to support her in every way, and if another country were to try and take her possessions we should be bound to fight that Power, and then we should be fighting for what was really slavery.

He would be bringing the matter up in the House of Lords on the 27th inst., and he looked for the support and encouragement of the Archbishop of Canterbury, Lords Selborne, Lytton, Lamington and Channing.

Mr. S. J. G. HOARE, M.P., said that he had had the opportunity of raising this question in the House of Commons, and on each of these occasions he had insisted on a point to which Lord Mayo had alluded, viz., that repatriation should be made more effective.

There were two things which were now finally established by the White Paper published a few months ago. First, that the natives did want to return to their homes, and, secondly, that although they might have spent a long time on the islands, yet they did not forget the place from which they originally came. We were told that the natives did not wish to go home; that, however, could no longer be urged, and, that being so, it was of the utmost importance that they should be given the opportunity of repatriation, to which under their contracts they were entitled. During the last few months, he had asked several questions in the House of Commons as to how this repatriation was proceeding, and, as far as he could judge from the answers received, it was not going on half as speedily as it should. In November, 1913, according to the White Paper, the British Minister in Lisbon was told by Senhor Costa, the Portuguese Minister, that repatriation was not proceeding as fast as it should, but that this arose solely from insufficiency of vessels to convey the labourers to the mainland, with the result that, according to the figures which were given to Mr. Lyttelton by the Foreign Office, only 2,071 *serviçaes* were repatriated in the year 1913 and 1,000 Moçambique labourers. How far was the excuse given by the Portuguese Minister valid? The Anti-Slavery and Aborigines Protection Society had made a careful inquiry into the carrying capacity of the ships that call regularly at these islands, and they had discovered that if the ships of certain Portuguese lines, and also British and German ships, carried all the natives ready for repatriation to their full carrying capacity, they could take to the mainland not less than 20,000 natives per annum. A great deal had therefore to be done if repatriation was to be effective. Only to-day the Archbishop of Canterbury had received a telegram from Lisbon giving certain new figures as to the number of natives who were being repatriated in 1914. This showed that, at the very outside (including Moçambique labourers), only about 6,000



natives were to be repatriated this year. The excuse given by Senhor Costa was altogether invalid.

A further point was that if repatriation was to be effective, the natives must not be landed on the mainland without a penny with which to support themselves on a journey of sometimes two thousand miles to their homes. That brought one to the question of the Repatriation Fund. Under the system of contract labour, half the wages of the labourers—sometimes even more—was deducted in order that they should have something to take them home. Inquiries had been made as to the amount of the Repatriation Fund, and to put it at the very lowest estimate, £100,000 (money paid by the labourers themselves) could not be accounted for. £10 at the least was supposed to be given to the natives when their contracts had expired, but somehow or other this money had disappeared. Large numbers of natives when they reached the mainland did not have the money which had been deducted from their wages.

He hoped one of the results of the Conference would be to lay special stress upon the necessity of speeding up repatriation, and that every native should receive the ten pounds to which he was entitled at the end of his contract.

Mr. E. D. MOREL expressed the admiration which was due to the dogged pertinacity of the Rev. J. H. Harris and of the Anti-Slavery Society. Considerable progress had been made during the last two or three years through the Society's efforts. Repatriation, although proceeding slower than we could wish, was at any rate a reality. It was not repatriation on paper, but was repatriation in fact.

Another cause for satisfaction was the appointment of a body of Consuls to watch conditions on the islands, and to see that labourers who did not wish to re-contract should not be forced to do so.

One weak point in the armour of reform was, and always had been, in his opinion, the situation on the mainland in the interior of Angola. Labourers were being repatriated from the islands to the mainland, but labourers were also being recruited now from the mainland to the islands. He strongly doubted whether these mainland labourers offered themselves willingly. It was impossible for him to credit that the evil reputation of the islands, which had burned itself deep into the hearts and minds of these people for generations, could have evaporated because there had been some reforms in the administration of the mainland and because a few thousand natives had been repatriated back to their homes.

He urged the necessity of concentrating as far as possible on what he believed to be the bed-rock of the whole evil—the situation on the mainland, for unless we felt sure that the natives on the mainland were freely offering themselves for work on the islands, what was given to us with the left hand was taken away with the right.

The Rev. C. E. WILSON, Secretary of the Baptist Missionary Society, said he was not there to make any apology whatever for the action of their missionaries at San Salvador. He recounted the various points relating to the arrest of Mr. Bowskill and the two native Christians, Nekaka and Mantu.

To get at the bottom of the trouble, it was necessary to go back to the year 1912, when they first received reports from two of their missionaries, Messrs. Thomas and Gamble, of slave recruiting in their districts. They gave evidence of what they themselves had actually seen and heard, and their reports were forwarded to Sir E. Grey. It was important to remember that Mr. Bowskill was not at San Salvador at that period. It was not until 1913 that the trouble came to a head and ended in the insurrection.

He was very anxiously waiting for the report of Consul Bell, and he hoped the fullest possible publicity would be given to the investigations of H.M. Consul. It was also important to see the report of the official investigation into the action of the Portuguese official guilty of slave-trading, which had been sent to Lisbon,

He urged the necessity of immediate action. Mr. Bowskill was already suffering in health, and serious consequences might result if he were not either fully acquitted or sent home. He was also anxious that pressure should be brought to bear upon the Portuguese Government to deal fairly with the people and to release the native Christians, who had been treated most cruelly, being kept on one occasion without either food or water for five days.

Mr. T. E. HARVEY, M.P., said they must all have felt that that afternoon had marked a landmark in the history of this struggle for securing elementary human rights for those thousands of unhappy people. Before long we might be compelled to take the heroic step of denouncing the Treaty which at present bound us to Portugal. Before that happened (it might not even be necessary to take that step) other measures should be taken to mitigate the lot of the slave labourers on the islands.

The suggestion made by Lord Mayo was one of great value—that before labourers were shipped from the mainland they should be brought before a proper official and in the presence of our Vice-Consul should have an opportunity of saying whether or not they wished to go.

The last report from our Vice-Consul in San Thomé and Principe contained some significant words upon the way in which agreements were made. The Consul stated that he had met an Englishman who had been induced to sign a three years' agreement by being assured he was going to a healthy climate! The writer had also met several men who had signed agreements without the least knowledge of the conditions which they had to face. If that was the position of educated Europeans, what must be the position of poor ignorant Africans?

We must see that contracts were made a reality, and also, when repatriation took place, that it too was made a reality. It was possible at present for the planters to have special power over the servicaes, because under the custom of the islands, labourers could only be contracted to their old masters; they could not sell their labour to anyone at their will.

Mr. Hoare had shown how these unfortunate men were robbed of half their wages, and the figures given by him as to the defalcations in the Repatriation Fund were all the more serious when we remembered that thousands of these people never lived to reclaim the ten pounds to which they were entitled. We should strongly press that the accounts of that Fund should be thoroughly overhauled and put on a proper basis. The merest justice, the very letter of the law, should be secured for these unhappy people. We should not have done everything when we had done that, but we should have done a little.

Mr. ST. LOE STRACHEY said that it was most important that there should be some practical outcome of the Conference, and that it should not evaporate in private speech. Every effort should be made to focus the general atmosphere, the general impression of the Conference, and a statement should be issued to the Press in the form of an appeal to the nation to take some action and to insist that we should not be contented with mere pious advice to the Portuguese, but that something more definite must be done without delay.

Sir T. FOWELL BUXTON, as President of the Society, expressed their thanks to His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury for his presence there that afternoon and for the help and encouragement he had given them. He was sure they were all greatly indebted to him for his sympathy and for the weighty speech with which he had favoured them.

The Hon. J. C. LYTTETON, Chairman of the Committee, seconded the vote of thanks.

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#### COMMENTS OF THE *African World*.

The Society's Conference was the subject of a special article in the *African World* of July 18, which protested against the revival of Portuguese slavery allegations and disputed the statements of the Society upon the present position in Angola, maintaining that it had "distorted official despatches," and taken no account of the efforts of the Portuguese to introduce reforms. An interview was also published with Major Norton de Matos, the Governor-General of Angola, in London, who maintained that the arrest and detention of Mr. Bowskill at San Salvador had nothing to do with native labour recruiting, and that the natives recruited from that place for Cabinda were not taken against their wills!

The general contention of the article is that the charges brought by the Society are out of date, but the writer does not appear to see that the bulk of the serviçaes now on the islands were brought there under conditions of slavery, and that no amount of improvement recently effected can affect their position. As regards the alleged twisting of official despatches, the Society is perfectly prepared to let the White Book speak for itself; no impartial reader can mistake the meaning of the reports of Mr. Consul Smallbones and others contained in it.

At the close of the article the writer, after stating his objection to the holding of a "Hole and Corner Conference," threw out a suggestion that "no people would be better pleased than the Portuguese if an independent inquiry could be made into present-day native labour conditions in the territories mentioned." On this the following letter was addressed to the *African World* on behalf of the Society and was published in the issue of July 25, which devoted another article to the subject, and claimed Sir Harry Johnston as admitting reform by his letter to *The Times* of July 20, while contesting some of his statements.

SIR,—We have read with no little interest the article in the *African World* upon Native Labour Conditions in Portuguese West Africa, and also the interview with Senhor Norton de Matos. From this and other information in our possession, there appears to be reason for regarding your assistant editor, Mr. James Finlay, and to some extent the *African World*, as the unofficial mouthpiece of the Portuguese Government and planters of West Africa. Under these circumstances we beg to ask a question of capital importance arising out of your publication. Mr. Finlay says on page 598 :—

"I am convinced that no people would be better pleased than the Portuguese if an independent inquiry could be made into present day native labour conditions in the territories mentioned."

We should appreciate your being able to confirm this suggestion on behalf of the Portuguese authorities. We can promise that the proposal would be given the most careful consideration by the committee of this Society, and hope you will be able to publish both this letter and your reply.

Yours faithfully,

TRAVERS BUXTON, *Secretary*.

JOHN H. HARRIS, *Organizing Secretary*.

In an editorial note it is stated that the *African World* cannot confirm the suggestion on behalf of the Portuguese Government or planters, but "can only repeat the statements of the Governor-General, that he welcomes and gives every assistance to the British Consular officials in prosecuting



their inquiries." If such an inquiry be held, the Editor goes on to suggest that neither the Anti-Slavery Society nor Mr. Finlay be "units of the Commission," but that "each would of course give evidence." We are not clear as to what these words mean, but the writer appears to mistake the character of the investigation proposed.

The *African World* is especially indignant at being regarded as an unofficial mouthpiece of the Portuguese, which it stigmatizes as an "unworthy insinuation."

Our belief was based on the fact that in February last the *African World* published a special edition devoted entirely to Portuguese West Africa compiled by Mr. Finlay as their special Commissioner, which contains articles on such subjects as Progress in San Thomé, the Cocoa Industry, Methods of Recruiting, the Ideal Conditions of Labourers on the Cocoa Plantations, "Labour Absolutely Free," etc., with a number of portraits of officials and other illustrations and details of all kinds on the trade, shipping and products of the colony.

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### The Colonial Office Debate.

In the debate in the House of Commons on the Colonial Office vote on July 28 two questions were raised which are of special interest to the Society, viz., the Native Labour question in British East Africa and the Native Land Act of the Union of South Africa.

#### LABOUR IN EAST AFRICA.

Mr. EDMUND HARVEY, M.P., referred to the report of the Native Labour Commission in East Africa, and drew attention to the danger arising from the attitude of many of the settlers to the natives' right to their land, and the question of native labour. He said :—

"It seems to me quite clear from the evidence of that Commission that a number of settlers have been constantly pressing on the Government to force the natives out of their reserves in order that there may be a more adequate supply of labour for the planters. It is a very natural and economic demand on the part of the settlers, but the position of the native is a very serious one. It has been suggested that the taxation of the natives should be increased, so that they may be forced to spend a larger time in the year labouring for the white settlers. It has been suggested that they should be compelled to wear clothes, in order that they should be forced to buy them. It has been suggested that they should be compelled to do their share of work for the Government, and possibly that they should be farmed

out to the settlers. I hope the Colonial Secretary will give us an assurance upon all these points.

" But beyond that question of native labour there is the great question of the natives' right to their land, and their right to the existing reserves and to the land which has not yet been definitely assigned to any one, and which forty years ago was, if the property of any one, the property of these black natives, when we ourselves had no intention of going into the country. I think public opinion has not yet realized how serious the position to these natives is.

#### THE MASAI.

" In the eye of the law it has been made quite clear by the action that certain members of the Masai tribe have endeavoured to bring, in order to set aside the transfer of their land by chiefs to the Colonial Office. The question of the justice and expediency of that transfer was questioned by certain members of the tribe who were dissatisfied with it. There is no doubt they tried to question its legality, and the High Court of British East Africa decided that these natives, not being British subjects, had no right to bring the action at all in the British Courts. They were a foreign people whose chiefs had made a treaty with the British Crown, and this solemn treaty pledged the honour of the British Crown that these lands should be theirs for ever. They were told that they had no power to bring their case before the British Court, though they are brought before the British Courts again and again if their cattle stray out of bounds and cross the border, as they do in times of great drought. They can come before the Courts as defendants, but they are not allowed to come before the Court in any other capacity. Because of this quibble of the status of British East Africa they are not allowed to come before the Court and urge their case against the Government. Surely this is a very substantial injustice. Are we to allow it to continue indefinitely by continuing this anomalous status of a protectorate when we all know we have no intention of abandoning it, and when to all intents and purposes it is part of the dominions of the Crown. We are doing great injustice to a large number of the native population, because they are not getting a chance of maintaining their rights. It may be that this claim may not have been justified in the Courts, but at least those dissatisfied natives had a right to bring it, and we ought to see that that right as given to them should be maintained."

#### NATIVES' LAND.

Mr. Harvey said that the evidence given before the Labour Commission showed that the trade settlers had sworn that the reserves ought to be cut down, and asked that the land reserved should be taken away, and that the natives should be compelled to come out and work. " Have we a

right to say that the natives should work for us? We have every right to induce them, by education, by economic conditions, and otherwise, to give more of their time to manual labour. I am entirely in favour of that, but have we a right to compel them by taking away this land, which is morally theirs? I hope the Colonial Secretary will see that it is made quite clear that the British Government will uphold the unwritten rights of the natives, and will maintain them at whatever cost. I feel there is reason for pressing this now because there is before the Government a draft Ordinance, and that Ordinance declares that all the land already secured should be Crown land. And it could be made perfectly easy by administrative act for this land to be taken away from the actual occupiers without compensation. I see a real danger—I do not say under the present administration, but we must look ahead—of measures taken now being made an excuse in years to come for a great act of injustice being done to these natives. I hope that the Colonial Secretary, when he speaks upon this point, will make it quite clear that in future, if reserves are delimited, regard will be had not merely to the actual population, but to the natural growth of the population, and that room will be left for them, and that he will trust to other measures, such as education, and a gradual pressure of economic causes when you have a high state of civilization, rather than forced measures suggested by some of the settlers to get the natives to come in and give their labour, as so many of the settlers in British East Africa desire them to do. I think we have very great reason to see that we take away this reproach now being made against our rule, and that while we talk very much about shouldering the white man's burden, we will take great care not to secure for ourselves the black man's land."

Mr. HARCOURT in his reply said that he hoped the mistake would not be made of confusing the evidence with the Report of the Commission, because the latter did not at all reflect a good deal of the evidence which had been given. It was quite true that some of the witnesses expressed the opinion that the present native reserves were too large. He did not share that view (hear, hear) and he did not intend to attempt to increase the amount of available labour by starving the labourer of the land on which he lived. Native labour interests were carefully safeguarded by the Ordinance of 1910, which laid down very strict rules as to the recruitment of labour. The recommendations of the Commission were now under the consideration of the Government and he was not prepared to give any final decision in the matter to-day. The Committee might trust him to move cautiously in the matter, with due regard to all the interests concerned. Improved arrangements were being made for the internal transport of labour. A revision of native and general taxation might quite possibly be necessary in the future, but if so, the matter would be considered independently of the labour supply, and it would not be used as an indirect means

of increasing it. Turning to East Africa, the Masai had abandoned their appeal to the Privy Council, not because they had no right of appeal, but acting on advice, and he was glad to say that they were now abundantly satisfied with their new reservations.

#### NATIVE LAND ACT OF SOUTH AFRICA.

This subject, in connexion with the visit of the Native Deputation recently in this country, was raised in the debate by Sir Albert Spicer and Mr. Percy Alden.

Mr. ALDEN, after referring to a discussion which took place on a resolution moved by him, which had been passed unanimously by the House previous to the Act of Union, when the Under-Secretary for the Colonies laid it down as a duty of the Imperial Parliament to protect the interests of natives in their land and their rights and liberties in every possible way, said :—

In reference to the Native Land Act of 1913, I want to put two or three points before the right hon. gentleman. In the Union of South Africa, blacks own about 4,500,000 morgen of land, and the whites own fourteen times as much land as the blacks, though, of course, they are very much smaller in number. The inequality is very noticeable in the Transvaal, where there are 300,000 whites holding 31,000,000 morgen of land, as against a total of 32,000,000 morgen, and the 1,000,000 natives only have 500,000 morgen of land which they can call their own.

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It has been said over and over again in South Africa that Sub-section (a) of the first clause applies equally to Europeans and Whites as well as to the natives. There is, they say, no injustice. The European is estopped from this purchase of land, just as the native is estopped. All I can say in answer to that is that the fallacy is shown the moment you begin to ask what land the natives have to sell. The native areas are already overcrowded, and they positively have no land which they could sell. When once a native leaves his farm or is evicted, or has to quit for any reason whatever, the Act does not allow him to purchase, hire, or to lease anywhere else for farming purposes except from natives, who have not the land to lease or to sell. He therefore must become a servant of the farm. There is absolutely nothing else for him to do. This Act has already produced very great hardships. It has produced hardships to the people who were under notice to quit at the time the Act was passed, to the people who have actually since then been evicted from their farms, to the natives who were in search of land and who are wandering about with their families and stock and have nowhere to settle, and to the natives who have had to leave their crops unreaped. There are many hundreds of such cases of



hardship which have been inflicted under the Act which is being enforced on all sides.

We call ourselves the protectors of the rights of the natives, and we claim that we have always, in season and out of season, insisted that those rights should not be infringed, and that no action should be taken against their liberties. The Imperial Government cannot, of course, intervene in the sense of asking the Government of South Africa either to rescind an Act of Parliament or to amend an Act of Parliament, unless it is their own wish, but I must point out that Clauses 1, 4 and 5 do operate most harshly against the native, and it might be possible, on the representation of the right hon. Gentleman, for the Prime Minister of South Africa to mitigate the hardships. I do not say that it would be possible to ask him to suspend altogether the operations of those Clauses until such time as the Land Commissioners reported, but certainly, if the Prime Minister could see his way to do that, it would do a very great deal to conciliate native opinion in South Africa, and it seems to me that it would be one of the most humane things that could possibly be conceived. Apart altogether from that, I want to ask the right hon. Gentleman, in view of the fact that Mr. Dower, the Minister for Native Affairs, by the wish and on the instructions of General Botha, wrote a letter\* with regard to native lands, and to native affairs generally, to one of the deputation—which deputation, I believe, is still in England—whether he will use that letter as a lever for obtaining some sort of definite native policy in South Africa.

I say that this letter bespeaks a very wise and statesmanlike policy, and if only that policy could be, shall I say, recommended or approved of by the right hon. Gentleman, if he would intimate to the Government of South Africa that he strongly approves of that policy, and that he would wish to see it put into operation as speedily as possible, I believe that he would do a very great deal to create good feeling in South Africa, and he would certainly reassure the natives with regard to their future welfare.

Sir A. SPICER said: I quite realize that in South Africa we have a self-governing country, and, therefore, one would be desirous to be very careful in what he said with regard to its administration and legislation. But this, at any rate, is the right place to express the views that are held by very large numbers of people in this country, who have devoted a good deal of time and money in doing what they can to educate and uplift the native races of South Africa. Those of us who know South Africa, are perfectly well aware that whilst it is now a country owned by the white races, it can only be properly and fully developed with the help of the native races, and the better educated they are, the better work they will be able to do for South Africa. This Native Land Act was passed very hurriedly. Of

\* See *Anti-Slavery Reporter* for July, p. 79.

course, we cannot blame South Africa for passing legislation hastily, seeing that we are accustomed sometimes to do the same thing in the Mother of Parliaments. Again, the appointment of the Commission, which is now inquiring into the subject and is taking evidence, is helping, I think, to produce injustice in some cases, so far as the natives are concerned, because the introduction of the Lands Act has led farmers to take action to enforce their rights. They have terminated the rent-paying agreements of former tenants, and, knowing that these are precluded from making new agreements for the hire of land, they have either rejected them or have demanded from them three months' unpaid service per annum, which has had the indirect effect of reducing a free people to a condition of service. I could give instances of that from well authenticated sources. I will refer to one only. It is the case of a chief and his people living on land which they and their fathers have dwelt upon for eight generations. The farm was recently purchased by a farmer resident in another province. He decided to terminate the rent-paying conditions previously in existence between the former owner and the natives, and to substitute labour conditions, under which even the chief, an old man, has been required to give service. The people were called upon to quit their houses, square buildings, timbered and thatched, and in connexion with this the owner gave less than one month's notice in the following terms :—

"This is to notify I can let you have the school building no longer. I bought the farm and wish to receive the same at the end of your school quarter."

We desire to speak with all due respect of the self-governing Dominions of South Africa, but I think we may fairly ask the Colonial Secretary to help the Union Government to realize that there is a strong feeling in this country in favour of everything possible being done to secure just and reasonable treatment for the natives. One may fairly ask the right hon. Gentleman to use all reasonable influence with the Union Government to secure for the natives a fair *quid pro quo* for the loss of their former rights of land purchase, which would mean in some cases an extension of the native area, and if it were possible to suspend to some extent the operation of the Act until the Land Commission has reported.

Mr. HARCOURT, as will be seen from the part of his speech dealing with this subject, held out no hope that he would favourably consider the appeals made to him. He said that the Land Act was the direct outcome and result of the Commission appointed by Lord Milner some years ago, over which Sir Godfrey Lagden presided, to gather accurate information as to native affairs so as to arrive at a common understanding on questions of native policy. The recommendations of the Commission had been embodied in an Act which had been in operation for twelve months. An

inquiry had been instituted under the Act and the whole Act was a temporary measure until the Commission reported. The suspension of the Act would be worse than useless because it would suspend the inquiry which was now taking place, and in the interests of the natives themselves. He could not believe that any further Commission was necessary. The principle was to set apart lands for white and native occupation with no power of purchase by either in the domain of the other. (Hear, hear.) The Act gave for the first time statutory pledges to the existing reserves; they could not be reduced though they might be enlarged. The reserves were quite capable of accommodating many more natives. The native was not prohibited from buying land in the Cape, and he might buy land elsewhere by the consent of the Governor-General. The Act was transitory until the Union Government should make other provisions. The peril was the squatting of natives on absentee landlords' farms, which was very undesirable and led to frequent stock-theft. There was no limit to the number of native farm labourers who could reside on "white" property. There could be no necessity to send out a British Commission when there was one already at work in South Africa. In any case, it would be an unprecedented proceeding, and he was not sure that it would not be insulting. General Botha had written a letter to the members of the native deputation, who said they were satisfied with the terms he put forward. But they had asked him to "back General Botha's Bill" on behalf of the Imperial Parliament. To do that would be insulting, and even if General Botha were to break his word with the natives he would have no power to enforce its being kept. If the Government of South Africa could not be trusted in this matter they were not to be trusted in anything; but one knew quite well that they could be trusted. The Indian Immigration Act recently passed had been accepted by the representatives of the Indians as their Magna Charta in South Africa, and should be a guarantee of the way in which General Botha intended to act. He had stated in the Union Parliament that it was his policy to see that a feeling of contentment and satisfaction grew up among the native population. Although this country still boasted that it was the protector of natives, Parliament should have some regard for the sovereign power of the Union of South Africa, and ought not to be invited to intervene unless gross and palpable injustice was alleged and proved. The deputation which had come here ought to make their appeal to their own Parliament, and not to appeal to us against their own Parliament, except upon the basis of approved and admitted injustice. They had neither proved, nor was there a suspicion of any such injustice to the blacks.

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### British East Africa.

It will be remembered that an Ordinance abolishing the legal status of slavery throughout the East Africa Protectorate was passed in 1907, and a sum of £40,000 was set aside for compensation to such masters as could prove their claims before the Court.

It will be seen from the following paragraph in the last published report of the Protectorate (for 1912-13) that most of the compensation cases have now been settled, and when the remaining claims have been met the whole thing will be brought to an end. This will mean the closing of a long and discreditable chapter in the connexion of this country with a system of slavery, and one with which our Society actively concerned itself for many years. We mentioned in our notice of the late Bishop Tucker in our last issue how long and vigorously that brave man fought for the establishment of freedom in East Africa, where so much of his work was done.

#### SLAVERY.

The work in connexion with the abolition of slavery has been conducted smoothly during the year.

719 claims for compensation have been dealt with in the Courts, seventy-seven of these were dismissed and compensation paid in 453 cases, amounting to a total of Rs.30,595.

Rs.3,735 was paid for maintenance to aged and infirm slaves.

The total number of slaves on the roll of maintenance now amounts to 112. The average rate of compensation paid during the year is £4 10s. 0d. per head.

Since the introduction of the Ordinance in 1907, out of 7,868 cases lodged, 6,767 cases have been dealt with and there is still a balance of 1,101 cases pending settlement.

The total expenditure during the year amounted to £3,375.

Out of the original vote of £40,000 a balance of £2,929 remains unspent. This will be utilized for the remaining claims, after which the office will be closed down.

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### Native Labour in East Africa.

In reply to the letter addressed by the Society to the Colonial Office, which has since been published in pamphlet form, on important questions arising out of the report of the Native Labour Commission, Mr. Harcourt stated that he was awaiting detailed recommendations from the Governor of the East Africa Protectorate on various points arising out of that report, and that he proposed in due course to present papers to Parliament showing what action had been taken on the whole matter. In acknowledging this letter, Mr. Har-



court was asked by the Secretaries for an intimation of his views in regard to forced labour for private profits, which brought the following satisfactory reply.

DOWNING STREET,

July 9, 1914.

SIR,—

I am directed by Mr. Secretary Harcourt to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of June 30 on the subject of native labour in East Africa, and to state in reply that the proposition in the last sentence of your letter, viz., that forced labour for private profit amounts to slavery, appears to him to be self-evident.

I am, etc.,

H. J. READ.

The following letter was therefore addressed to the Press, and was published in a number of newspapers.

#### A DEFINITION OF SLAVERY.

Sir,—

In view of the increase in the exercise of force to secure labour for tropical regions, serious developments in the South Seas, and proposals now being made in British East Africa, the Committee of this Society appealed to Mr. Harcourt to declare publicly that in the opinion of his Majesty's Colonial advisers forced labour for private profit is a form of slavery, and will not be tolerated within the British Dominions.

Upon this important issue Mr. Harcourt has given us permission to say that in his opinion the proposition contained in the Society's letter "that forced labour for private profit amounts to slavery appears to him to be self-evident."

This eminently satisfactory reply brings the Colonial Office into harmony upon this cardinal issue with the Foreign Office, for to Sir Edward Grey is due this definition of modern slavery.

At the same time we beg to point out that not only in foreign territories for which we have treaty obligations, but even in certain British territories, forced labour for private profit appears to be increasing.

TRAVERS BUXTON, *Secretary.*

JOHN H. HARRIS,

*Organizing Secretary.*

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### East African Land and Labour.

THE East African *Leader*, as we anticipated, has no liking for the Society's critical examination of the evidence tendered by the settlers and others before the East African Government Commission upon the supply of labour. The editor of the *Leader* has no word of censure, or even regret, for the deplorable conditions which the report revealed, and if his attitude towards the administration of justice is at all widely shared, the time has clearly come for the Society to exercise increased vigilance with regard to affairs in the British East African Protectorate. Lest we should do the *Leader* any injustice, we quote from the editorial:—

"Dr. Leys is another gentleman with views, he says: 'the law rarely punishes the European, even in brutal assaults.' *Fie for the law, we say.*"\*

"Fie for the law," as a public motto issued by an apparently responsible newspaper for the guidance of white opinion, is one we shall not readily forget.

The Committee of the Society, it will be remembered, asked for assurances from Mr. Harcourt both with regard to native lands and compulsory labour. The Society had remarked upon the fact that comparatively few natives gave evidence upon the adequacy of existing reserves. The Editor of the *Leader*, unable to meet this contention, remarks sarcastically:—

"The Aborigines Protection Society regrets that more *native* evidence were not taken on this point. They really think that if the natives had been properly canvassed the Reserves would be shown by them to be too small. We think so too."

The request to Mr. Harcourt that he would declare that forced labour for private profit is but another name for slavery has been accepted by the Colonial Secretary in a manner entirely satisfactory to the Committee. Upon this subject of forced labour the Editor of the East African *Leader* goes even further than the Society, for, in quoting from the article in the *Contemporary Review* by Mr. Harris, he says:—

"This being so, and forced labour being, *as he rightly contends*, only another name for slavery . . ."

Now Mr. Harris said nothing of the kind; all he advanced was that when forced labour was used for private profit it ceased to be legitimate *corvée* and became slavery. We are consequently much interested to learn that in the view of the Editor of the East African *Leader* all forms of forced labour are slavery!

The Editor concludes his attack upon the Society in the following absurd language:—

"But the issue between the Society and the European colonies in

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\* Italics ours—ED.

Africa is a big one indeed. The Society would preserve Africa for the native as he lives to-day and has lived in the past ; the European colonist would have him learn to labour and join in common effort to lighten the darkness over this mysterious continent."

Those who know the Society and its efforts on behalf of native races are happily aware that this is a grotesque misrepresentation of the Society's work, which has ever been in the direction of teaching the native to "labour and join in common effort to lighten the darkness over this mysterious continent" of Africa.

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### Parliamentary.

#### HOUSE OF COMMONS.

##### THE PUTUMAYO.

*July 2.*

Mr. KING asked the Secretary for Foreign Affairs whether he had considered the recommendations of the Putumayo Select Committee, which reported last session ; whether a Bill had been drafted embodying any of the Committee's recommendations ; and, if so, when the Bill would be introduced.

Sir E. GREY : No Bill has been drafted by the Government, and I cannot promise the introduction of a Bill.

Mr. KING : Is the matter under consideration at all ?

Sir E. GREY : Oh, yes. It is a matter of considerable importance. As a matter of fact, the Law Officers are being consulted on the question.

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*July 16.*

Mr. KING asked whether, since the Report of the Select Committee on Putumayo was issued last year, any further instructions have been issued to Consuls relative to the slave trade or slave labour ; and whether the Consular service has been strengthened in any districts where English companies are using coloured labour ?

Sir E. GREY : I would refer the hon. Member to the circular dispatch to His Majesty's Consular officers, of 15th December, 1913, copies of which have been laid before Parliament. The answer to the second part of the question is in the negative, but inquiries are being made in order that the matter may not be lost sight of.

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##### LUSHAI HILLS SLAVERY.

*July 7.*

Mr. NOEL BUXTON asked whether any progress has been made in the arrangements for modifying the system of semi-slavery prevalent in the Lushai Hills ?

Mr. C. ROBERTS : If the hon. Member refers to the Bawi system, certain principles have been laid down by the Assam Administration, in consultation with the local missionaries, for dealing with the system, which should diminish its objectionable features. The Chief Commissioner of Assam will visit the Lushai Hills and examine the conditions personally.

*July 8.*

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SLAVERY, PEONAGE, AND FORCED LABOUR BILL.

Dr. CHAPPLE asked the Prime Minister whether, in view of the fact that the Government has not prepared any Bill to amend the law relating to slavery, he can now see his way to give facilities to the Slavery, Peonage, and Forced Labour Bill?

The PRIME MINISTER : I fear I do not see my way to give facilities for the large Bill referred to, but His Majesty's Government have not lost sight of the matter, of which they fully realize the importance.

*July 13.*

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PORTUGUESE WEST AFRICA (ARREST OF REV. J. S. BOWSKILL).

Mr. MURRAY MACDONALD asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the report of the British Consul relating to the arrest of the Reverend J. S. Bowskill has been received; if so, whether he will state its purport; and what action it is proposed to take upon it?

Lord H. CAVENDISH-BENTINCK asked whether any Consular reports upon the recent disturbances at San Salvador have yet been received; and, if so, whether these will be published at an early date?

Mr. ACLAND : A report has lately been received from Mr. Vice-Consul Bell on this subject, and is still under consideration.

Mr. HOARE : Will the report be issued to the House?

Mr. ACLAND : That is under consideration, and I cannot say. It is a voluminous report. I am having it printed, and, if I may, I will let the hon. Member know as soon as I can give him a full answer.

*July 21.*

Mr. EDMUND HARVEY asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he has received the Report of Mr. Hill, the British Consul sent to make investigations at San Salvador into the events connected with the arrest of Mr. Bowskill; and whether he will issue the Report as a White Paper at the earliest possible date?

Sir E. GREY : The Report has been printed for consideration, and as soon as I have read it I will say whether it can be laid.

*July 24.*

Mr. NEEDHAM asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he has received Vice-Consul Bell's report respecting the arrest of the Rev.



J. S. Bowskill and several of his native helpers ; if so, when will particulars be available ; and what steps he has taken or is taking in the matter ?

Sir E. GREY : Mr. Vice-Consul Bell's report is still under consideration and I cannot make any statement on the subject at present. I will inform my hon. Friend as soon as a decision has been reached.

July 23.

SOUTHERN RHODESIA (OWNERSHIP OF LAND).

Mr. HOLT asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether a reference to the Privy Council is about to be made for consideration and report upon the ownership of land in Southern Rhodesia ; and, if so, whether he will lay the terms of reference upon the Table ?

Mr. HARCOURT : Yes, Sir.

July 27.

Mr. ORMSBY-GORE asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he intends to make any statement on Tuesday with regard to his reference of the ownership of unalienated land in Rhodesia to the Privy Council, and to any action that can be taken by him in connexion with the administrative provisions in the charter of the British South Africa Company in October next ?

Mr. HARCOURT : I am laying Papers which will give information with regard to the Reference to the Privy Council, and I do not think that, pending the decision of the Judicial Committee, I can usefully discuss that question. As at present advised, I do not think that I shall be able to make a statement with regard to the Charter on the Colonial Office Vote.

NIGERIA.

July 15.

Mr. PARKER asked the Secretary for the Colonies whether the Provincial Courts in Nigeria presided over by executive officers would have jurisdiction over civil proceedings between the Government and natives ?

Mr. HARCOURT : No, sir. Suits by or against the Government will remain within the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court.

July 30.

Mr. BARNES asked whether 107 prisoners were found to be detained in the prison in Northern Nigeria without any record being found of any conviction against them, and that they had to be released ; and, if so, how long these prisoners had been detained ?

Mr. HARCOURT : I have no information as to this alleged illegal detention of prisoners. If the hon. Member can give me any evidence of the occurrence of such cases, I will ask the Nigerian Government for a report upon them.

Mr. THOMAS RICHARDSON asked what section of the Provincial Courts Ordinance provides for the case of civil suits between the Government and the natives of Nigeria?

Mr. HARCOURT: This is provided for by a separate Ordinance—Chapter 7 of the Laws of Southern Nigeria.

Mr. THOMAS RICHARDSON asked whether the Protectorate of Nigeria, with the exception of certain small areas not yet brought under British Government control, is in a state of unbroken peace and tranquillity; and, if so, why the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court should not be extended to the whole Protectorate with the exception of the disturbed areas?

Mr. HARCOURT: The satisfactory state of peace and tranquillity does not demand the extension to the more backward territories of Nigeria of a system which has been shown to be manifestly unsuited to them, and to cause great delays and many abuses.

Mr. JOWETT asked if the Nigerian Provincial Courts Ordinance is passed will there be any provision that a native accused of a crime involving a sentence of death or penal servitude will be entitled as of right to demand to be tried by a judge of the Supreme Court with a jury and assessors?

Mr. HARCOURT: No such provision is contained in the Ordinance. The provisions for transfer of cases to the Supreme Court and those requiring the confirmation of the Governor in the case of the heavier penalties are considered sufficient.

Mr. JOWETT asked if the Nigerian Provincial Courts Ordinance is passed will there be any provision that actions by or against a native wherein the Government is interested shall, on the request of the native or the Government, be tried by the Supreme Court, and not a Provincial Court presided over by an executive officer?

Mr. HARCOURT: Suits by or against the Government will remain within the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court.

Mr. JOWETT asked whether, considering the Supreme Court of Southern Nigeria has had jurisdiction over the Colony and Protectorate of Southern Nigeria for fourteen years, there is any urgency in the proposed legal changes; and whether the matter will be allowed to stand over till the wishes of the natives and inhabitants could be taken and a Committee publicly inquire into the matter of the proposed changes?

Mr. HARCOURT: It is only of recent years that the administration has been extended to large districts in the interior, to which the machinery of the Supreme Court has been found unsuitable. As I have already explained, the jurisdiction of the Court remains as before in the Colony and the principal centres of trade. There is no reason to delay the proposed

legislation, which is advocated by all those who have adequate knowledge and experience.

Mr. PARKER asked whether the Supreme Court of Northern Nigeria did not try any criminal and only one civil cause during the fourteen years of its existence ; and, if not, how many civil and criminal cases have been tried during that period ?

Mr. HARCOURT : I am not in a position to give this information without reference to the Governor-General of Nigeria. I will ask him for a report.

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### New Hebrides.

THE subject of the New Hebrides was brought up in Parliament in the Debate on the Foreign Office Vote in July. Sir Gilbert Parker complained of the lack of reports for eight years and suggested that the real reason was that the publication of the reports would have shown too serious a condition of things. Sir Edward Grey in his reply did not dispute that the working of the Condominium in the New Hebrides had not been at all satisfactory and that certain alterations in the administration were essential. As regards the publication of reports, he was prepared to contend that they had better make a fresh start and not publish reports received hitherto. It was impossible definitely to say that such agreement had been reached as would secure that abuses would be prevented for the future. The publication of papers would, he feared, lead to bickering and friction between the two Governments. The first and most essential thing was to keep within sight of an agreement.

Mr. William Redmond a little later asked when the result of the conference might be expected, and what the position of the Australian Government would be ; would they be consulted before any French arrangement is made ? Sir Edward Grey only replied to this generally that they would keep in close touch with the Government of Australia, but he could not say when the conference would be finished.

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### Mrs. Harris' Lectures.

THE quarterly *Bulletin* of the Swiss League for the protection of natives gives a full account of Mrs. Harris' visit to German Switzerland in March last, and of the addresses which she gave at Berne, Basle and Zurich. In each of these places successful meetings were held and considerable interest was aroused. In Basle the ground had been prepared for years past by the energy of Dr. Christ-Socin, and the public meeting was so crowded that many had to be turned away for lack of room. Two other meetings of a more private character were held, one at the house of Mme. Sarasin-Bischoff and another a *Missionsstunde*, organized by the well-known Basle Mission.

In Zurich fresh ground was opened, as the Swiss League had but few adherents in that city, but at both the meetings which were held the subject of anti-slavery and the cause of native races proved of great interest to those who heard Mrs. Harris and saw the lantern slides of photographs which she had taken in the Congo. These, in the words of the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, "constitute documents of the first importance from the ethnographical point of view." The same newspaper referred to the "sustained interest" with which her audience followed Mrs. Harris' account, "which she gave in as simple and natural a manner as though she were speaking of an every-day experience."

"It will seem almost impossible," it continued, "that a woman's strength could have borne the fatigues and dangers of a journey of over 5,000 miles on foot and in canoe, and we must admire not only the strength and energy which were called for by such an undertaking, but also the tact and kindness which she displayed in a country where the white man inspires fear and hatred in such sort as to arouse confidence and to gain for herself the friendship of the natives. Truly such a woman deserves honour and admiration."

### Putumayo Criminals.

WE are glad to publish the following letter received from the Bolivian Minister, Colonel Don Pedro Suarez, in regard to two of the criminals who were concerned in the outrages on the Putumayo :—

LEGACIÓN DE BOLIVIA, LONDRES,  
September 9, 1914.

DEAR SIR,—

With reference to correspondence, etc., that passed between us some time ago I now have the pleasure of informing you that the Peruvians Abelardo Agüero and Augusto Jiménez who were working in the Beni Rubber district on the properties of Messrs. Suarez Hermanos & Co. have been arrested by orders of my Government and handed to the Peruvian authorities at Maldonado. Victor Macedo, it appears, had previously left the Bolivian territory.

I am, dear Sir,

Yours faithfully,

PEDRO SUAREZ.

### Review.

#### THE UPPER REACHES OF THE AMAZON.

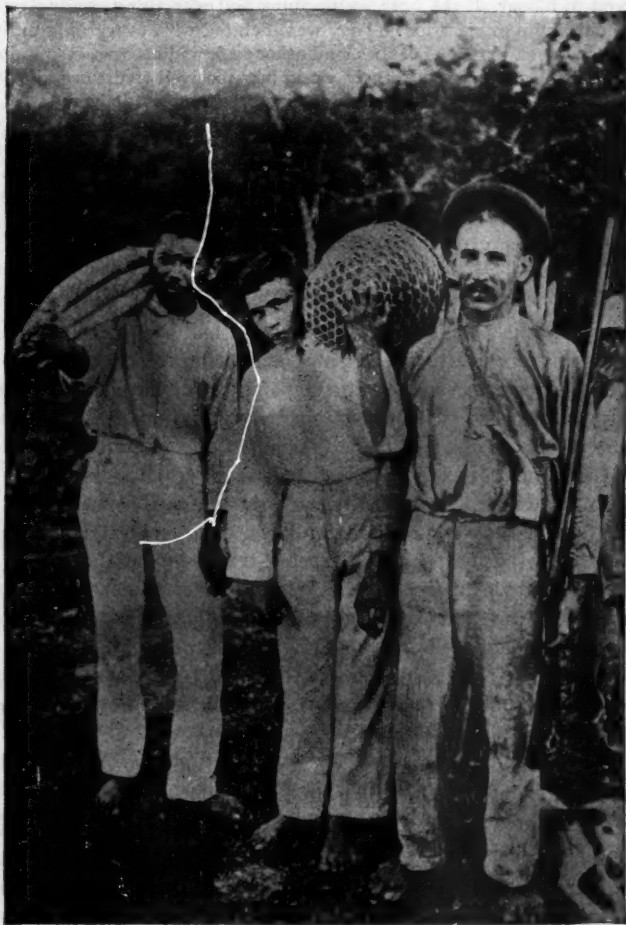
By JOSEPH F. WOODROFFE.\*

The author of this book put himself into communication with the Anti-Slavery Society soon after his return from South America last year, and gave us valuable information as to the labour conditions in that continent, of which we made public use. We welcome this book, which throws much light on the rubber industry, and on the peonage system on the Amazon generally

\* Methuen & Co., Ltd.



and the real slavery which it entails, not only for the Indian labourer, but also, as the writer of the preface points out, for the white man employed by the companies operating there, who is "cunningly enmeshed in debt by his



TYPES OF BRAZILIAN RUBBER-GATHERERS.  
(By permission of Messrs. Methuen & Co., Ltd.)

employers," and "a slave in every sense of the word." These companies are financed largely by British capital. The author was himself a victim of this horrible system.

Mr. Woodroffe had many adventures and varied experiences as a trader

in the Iquitos district and up the Peruvian rivers. He soon came across the system by which the Cokama Indians are employed in rubber working, which he describes as among the worst examples of peonage he met with :—

“ Not only were they obliged to work rubber in the season, but were forced to labour all the year, at anything and everything required of them, without any remuneration. They were debited with everything purchased by them, even to rent of canoes, and other tools and necessities required by them in order to carry out their work, but received credit occasionally for a proportion of the rubber, dried fuel, or vegetables delivered by them. Most of these unfortunates were in debt to the extent of £100 or more, after being in their employer's service almost a lifetime, and having no effects but what could be got into any ordinary portmanteau, and this after their master or owner, for such he considered himself, had made a huge fortune, without the slightest personal effort on his own part.

“ This system of exploiting the native labourer is not confined to the owner in question, but is the rule all over the country, and is slowly but surely causing the destruction of the Indian, civilized or otherwise.”

The author also found that the purchase and sale of Indian children was a local custom, which was tolerated and even protected.

In 1908 the writer entered the employment of the Peruvian Amazon Company, and worked as an accountant at their stations at El Encanto and La Chorrera, at both of which he had abundant opportunities for seeing the shameful treatment of the Indian workers and the scandals inseparable from the system, which he describes with great frankness. The life of the Indian rubber gatherer is, as we know from Sir Roger Casement's and other reports, one of ceaseless toil, hardship and cruel ill-treatment for the Indian ; and alike for him and for the *seringuero* (rubber estate proprietor), as Mr. Woodroffe points out, the conditions are deadly, owing partly to the climate, but still more to dirt, bad food and total lack of sanitation. Most of the *seringueros* are criminals and desperadoes of the worst type. On the Putumayo the habitual treatment of the women and girls by the employees, who exercised their brutality and lust upon them without limit or protest, constituted one of the most revolting features of the place. After six months at El Encanto, the author tells us, the toils of his indebtedness began to close round him and his life became “ a living hell.”

Later on Mr. Woodroffe went up the river Madeira in the employ of the railway company, and here, too, Mr. Woodroffe found evidence of “ nameless and numberless crimes committed, which are covered up by European capital and intelligence.”

This book will, we hope, be widely read for its vivid presentation of present-day slavery in South America. It should be practically useful, too, as showing up the way in which Englishmen have been induced by European commercial houses to leave their homes and have found themselves on reaching South America hopelessly involved in the toils of the iniquitous system of exploitation by which business is carried on there.

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